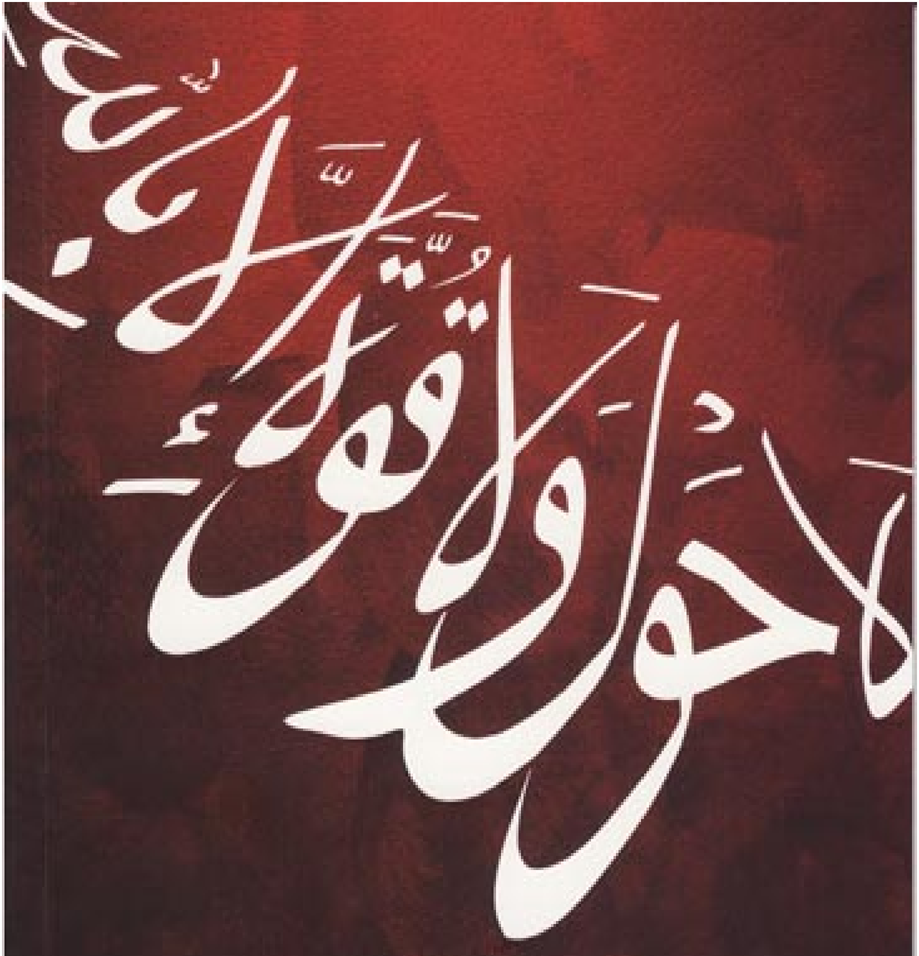


Treasure from the Treasures of Paradise

Shaykh ʿAbdul Razzāq ibn ʿAbdul Muḥsin al-Badr

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Shaykh ʿAbdul Razzāq ibn ʿAbdul Muḥsin al-Badr

TREASURE from the TREASURES of PARADISE

being a translation of his *'Al-Ḥawqala mafhūmahā wa faḍā'ilahā...'*

دار السنة

Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiyAllāhu ʿanhu*) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"Increase in saying *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*, for it is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise."

Aḥmad, 2/333

Treasure from the Treasures of Paradise

by Shaykh ʿAbdul Razzāq ibn ʿAbdul Muḥsin al-Badr

دار السنة
Dār as-Sunnah Publishers
B I R M I N G H A M

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

With the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful

All praises are due to Allāh, the Lord of the Universe, we seek His Guidance, and there is no might or power except with Him.

Making *dhikr* (remembrance of Allāh) has a high place in the religion of Islām and a lofty status in the souls of the believers, for it is from the greatest and best acts of obedience. It has enumerable fruits and benefits for this life and the next.

The Qur'ān and Sunnah are filled with proofs of the great status of *dhikr* and its many benefits for those who are steadfast in performing it.

Allāh said,

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً
وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُصَلِّى عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَـٰٓئِكَتُهُۥ لِيُخْرِجَكُم
مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَـٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَكَانَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿٤٣﴾
تَحِيَّتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهُۥ سَلَـٰمٌ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٤٤﴾

"O you who have believed, remember Allāh with much remembrance, And exalt Him morning and afternoon. It is He who confers blessing upon you, and His angels [ask Him to do so] that He may bring you out from darknesses into the light. And ever is He, to the believers, Merciful. Their greeting the Day they meet Him will be, "Peace." And He has prepared for them a noble reward"

[*Al-Aḥzāb* (33) 41-44]

He also said,

وَٱلذَّٰكِرِينَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَٱلذَّٰكِرَٰتِ أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

"The men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so - for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward"

[*Al-Aḥzāb* (33) 35]

Abū ad-Dardā' (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Should I not tell you of the best of your actions, and the purest of them to your Lord, and that which raises you most in levels, and what is better for you than donating gold and silver, and better than meeting your enemy so you strike their necks and they strike yours?" They said, "Of course, O Messenger of Allāh." So he replied, "The remembrance of Allāh."[1]

Muslim narrated that Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The *Mufaridūn* have surpassed!" They said, "Who are the *Mufaridūn*?" He replied, "Those men and women

[1] Tirmidhī #3377, Ibn Mājah #3890 and Ḥākim 1/496.
It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* #2629.

who remember Allāh in abundance."[2]

Al-Bukhārī narrated that Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) said, "The example of a person who makes *dhikr* of his Lord and a person who does not, is like that of a living and a dead person."[3]

And there are countless aḥādīth concerning this matter.

These *adhkār* (pl. *dhikr*) are distinguished, along with their many virtues and benefits, by their perfect meanings and beautiful phrasings - their many meanings and comprehensiveness that incorporates faith and goodness. They are from the comprehensive phrases of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the good qualities of our faith.

These *adhkār* contain no excessiveness or misguidance in their meanings, nor form any exaggeration in their phrasing. Rather, their words are concise and to the point, while containing very deep meanings. Therefore, they are easy to remember and pronounce, while possessing great substance. Their reward is great, and their benefits are many.

The Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned this when describing one of them, "(There are) two words that are beloved to the Most Merciful, light on the tongue, heavy on the scales:

«سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ الْعَظِيمِ»

Subḥān Allāh wa bi Ḥamdihi, Subḥān Allāhi al-'Adhīm.

Glory be to Allāh, and to Him is all Praise, Glory be to

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[2] Muslim #2676

[3] Bukhārī #6407

Allāh, the Most Perfect [and all Greatness is for Him].[4]

This is the case with all the *adhkār*, they are very light on the tongue, but heavy on the scales (of good deeds), and beloved to the Most Merciful, and some of them are superior over others, as indicated in the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

Even with what these *adhkār* contain of beauty and perfection in their meaning and wording, we still see many of the Muslims turn away from them and instead they turn towards invented *adhkār* and innovated supplications that are not in the Qur'ān or the Sunnah. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, 'From the people who are most blameworthy, is one who takes as his usual *dhikr* (remembrance) that which was not used by the Prophet (ﷺ), even if it was the habit of some of the scholars, and abandons that which the leader of mankind (the Prophet (ﷺ)) used to say.'[5]

In addition to this, many Muslims remain ignorant of the meaning of these *adhkār*, and if they knew their meanings and implications they would place much importance on learning and explaining them. So they would understand their true intent, which would lead to achieving the everlasting benefits contained in them.

Ibn al-Qayyim said the that best and most beneficial remembrances are those where the heart agrees with what is said on the tongue - and they are from the Prophetic *adhkār* - and the one making remembrance thinks about its meaning and purpose.[6]

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[4] Bukhārī #7563

[5] *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol.12, p.525.

[6] *Al-Fawā'id*, p.247.

So in light of what has preceded, from the great adhkār that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to consistently make and would encourage others regarding it, is the *ḥawqala*, or the saying of *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*, for this remembrance has benefits and virtues that no one but Allāh can encompass, and deep meanings and implications that strengthen ones' faith, certainty and their connection with Allāh. Since this remembrance is of such importance, I saw it fit to single it out in this treatise that I named: 'The *ḥawqala*, its meanings, virtues, and creedal implications.'

Despite the importance of this subject and strong need for it, I have not seen it being singled out in a treatise previously, except by two authors:

The first is Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī in a book he called 'An explanation of the *Ḥawqala* and *Hay'ala'*, and it is from the first books he authored, in the year 886 AH, as was mentioned by al-Ḥāj Khalīfah in his book.[7] However, I was unable to come across this treatise.

The second is by Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn 'Abd Al-Ḥādi, in a book entitled *'The Virtue of Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*, and it has been printed, but the topic of this book is limited to only mentioning the virtues of this statement.

I decided to present this subject in the following form:

The first topic: The correct understanding of the statement
The second: Its virtues
The third: Its creedal (theological) implications

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[7] *Kashf ad-Dhunūn*, 2/1040

The fourth: Noting some incorrect understandings regarding this statement.

From Allāh alone do I seek help and ask for His *tawfiq*, for there is no might or power but with Allāh, and He is sufficient for us and the best Protector.

CHAPTER ONE

The Understanding of the Word *'Ḥawqala'*

Firstly: What is intended by the word *'ḥawqala'*? It is a word that is summarised from the statement *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*. This shortening of a phrase in Arabic is done if it was heard (had a precedent) from the early Arabs. It is realised by taking a few letters from a statement to form a single word.

Shortening can also be done from two words, as was said in regards to a person attributed to the tribe of 'Abd Qays: (which became known as) 'Abqasī.

Or it can be from an entire sentence, such as the word *'Basmalah'*, which is a summary of the sentence *'Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm'*, or *'ḥawqala'*, the subject of this book, which means *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*.[1]

Imām al-Nawawī mentioned that some of the scholars of the Arabic language said that this word has also been mentioned as

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[1] *Al-Ṭatbīq As-Sarfī* of 'Abdu al-Rājihī, p.29,

'Ḥawqala', with the *Lām* before the *Qāf*.[2]

Secondly: The meaning of the statement *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*. The meaning of *'Ḥawl'* is movement, while the meaning of Quwwah is strength. Thus the meaning of this statement is that there is no movement from one state to another, and neither any strength for the slave to perform any of his affairs, except by Allāh, meaning by His help and *tawfiq* and guidance. Some statements have been narrated from the Salaf (the pious predecessor) and scholars after them, which further clarify the meaning.

For example, in the statement of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhumā*), he explained it as such: 'We have no power to act obediently except by Allāh, nor do we have strength to leave a sin except by Allāh.' This was narrated by ibn Abi Ḥātim.[3]

It was narrated that 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) said in explaining its meaning: 'There is no strength to stop sinning against Allāh except by His Protection, and no power to obey Him except with His Help.' [4]

It was narrated that 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) said, 'We do not own anything with Allāh, or instead of Him, we do not own except what He has allowed us to and it ultimately belongs to Him.' [5]

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[2] *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 17/27.

[3] It is mentioned by al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthur*, 5/393.

[4] *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 26/27

[5] It is mentioned by Ibn 'Alān in *al-Fatuḥāt al-Rabāniya*, 1/242.

Zuhayr ibn Muḥammad was asked about the explanation of *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*, so he said: 'You do not take what you love except by Allāh, and you do not stay away from what you hate except with the Help of Allāh.' This was narrated by ibn Abī Ḥātim.[6]

Abū al-Haytham al-Rāzī, an Imām in the Arabic language, was asked about its meaning, so he said: *'Ḥawl'* means movement, it is said: *'ḥāl'* if a person moves, so it is as if a person is saying: there is no movement or ability except by the Will of Allāh.[7]

It was said that its meaning is: There is no strength in keeping evil away nor power to achieve any good except by Allāh.[8]

All of these statements are similar in conveying the intended meanings of this great statement, which is why al-Nawawī said when he related some of these narrations: 'They are all quite similar.' [9]

The *I'rāb* (Arabic word structure) of this statement:

« لا » *'Lā'*: Meaning no, and it indicates (absolute) negation of anything else.

« حول » *'Ḥawla'*: Movement, and it is with a *'Fatḥa'* on the end

[6] It is mentioned by al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthur*, 5/394.

[7] *Tathīb ul-Lugha* by al-Azharī, 5/243.

[8] *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 27/17

[9] *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 27/17

of it, and the implication is: 'There is no movement in existent (except with Allah).'

« ولا » *'walā'*: And the *'wa'* of conjunction. And *'lā'*': No, it indicates (absolute) negation of anything else also.

« قوةَ » *'Quwwata'*: Strength, and it is with a *'Fatḥa'* on the end of it, and the implication is: 'There is no strength in existent (except with Allah).'

« إلا » *'illa'*: Indicating an exception.

« بالله » *'Billāh'*: This is from two words. The first is the letter *'Bā'*, meaning *'By'* or *'with'*, and the second the word *'Allāh'*. This is similar to a prepositional phrase in English.

The scholars have mentioned five different ways to say this statement that are grammatically correct:

1. *'Lā* Ḥawla *wa lā* Quwwata *illa Billāh'* « لا حولَ ولا قوةَ إلا بالله »

2. *'Lā* Ḥawla *wa lā* Quwwatan *illa Billāh'* « لا حولَ ولا قوةً إلا بالله »

3. *'Lā* Ḥawlun *wa lā* Quwwatun *illa Billāh'* « لا حولٌ ولا قوةٌ إلا بالله »

4. *'Lā* Ḥawla *wa lā* Quwwatun *illa Billāh'* « لا حولَ ولا قوةٌ إلا بالله »

5. *'Lā* Ḥawlun *wa lā* Quwwata *illa Billāh'* « لا حولٌ ولا قوةَ إلا بالله »

The scholar of Arabic language, Ibn Mālik mentioned these five

different ways in his famous *'Al-Alfiyyah'* poem.[10]

This statement also contains the word *'illa'* (except or but) which indicates restriction in Arabic. The scholar al-Sakkākī indicated that it is the most important way to confine or restrict ones statement.[11]

Al-Akhḍarī mentioned the different ways of restricting and specifying, in his poem *'Al-Jawhar al-Maknūn'* as follows:

1. *'illa'* - meaning *'except.'*
2. *'innama'* - meaning *'only.'*
3. *'lākin'* or *'bal'* - meaning *'rather.'*
4. To precede one word that would normally come after.[12]

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[10] Cf. *'Matun al-Alfiyyah'*, p.21.

[11] Cf. *'Miftāḥ al-'Ulūm'* of al-Sakkākī, p.289.

[12] For example, *"Iyyāka na'budu"* meaning *'You we worship'* would normally be said in Arabic as *'We worship you'*, but to specify that only Allāh is worshipped alone, the word *'You'* was brought first. This is why this *ayah* is translated as *"You alone we worship"*, even though it does not literally use the word *'alone.'* Allāh knows best.

CHAPTER TWO

The Virtues of *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*

There are many proofs from the Sunnah that have been narrated regarding the virtue of this statement, and these narrations are indicative of its great status. Every Muslim should pay the utmost attention to it, and to recite it abundantly due to the huge reward it entails. From these aḥādīth:

1. In addition to four other words being from the most beloved statements to Allāh, it was related in *Musnad* Aḥmad and from Tirmidhī and al-Ḥākim from the ḥadīth of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ (*raḍiyAllāhu ʿanhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said "There is no one on earth who says:

«لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ وَسُبْحَانَ اللهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ للهِ»

La ilāha illa Allāh, Allāhu Akbar, SubḥānAllāh, Alḥamdulillāh,

and

«لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ»

Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh,

except that his sins will be forgiven, even if they were like the foam on the ocean." [1]

Abū Dāwūd and al-Nasā'i narrated that ibn Abī Awfā (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) said, 'A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said 'Oh Messenger of Allāh, I am not able to learn the Qur'ān, so teach me something that will suffice.' The Prophet replied, 'Say:

«سُبْحَانَ اللهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ للهِ، وَلَا إِلَـهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ»

SubḥānAllāh, Alḥamdulillāh, Lā ilāha illa Allāh, Allāhu Akbar,

and

«لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ»

Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.'

The Bedouin man put his hands together and said: 'That is for Allāh, then what is for me?' So he told him to say:

«اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي، وَارْحَمْنِي، وَعَافِنِي وَارْزُقْنِي وَاهْدِنِي»

Allāhum maghfir lī, Warḥamnī, Wa 'Āfinī, Warzuqnī, Wahdinī.

'Oh Allāh, forgive me and have mercy on me, and relieve me, and provide for me, and guide me.'

The man joined his hands together, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'His hands have been filled with goodness."'[2]

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[1] Aḥmad, 2/158, 210, Tirmidhī #346 and Ḥākim 1/503. It was declared saḥiḥ by al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Jāmi'* #5636.

[2] Abū Dāwūd, #832, Nisa'ī, 2/143 and Dāraqutni, 1/313-314. It was declared ḥasan by al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥiḥ Abū Dāwūd*, 1/157

2. (This statement) was narrated to be from the enduring good deeds that Allāh mentioned:

وَٱلْبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيْرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

"But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for one's hope."

[*al-Kahf* (18) 46]

It was narrated in the ḥadīth of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Increase in the enduring good deeds' so they asked, 'What are they O Messenger of Allāh?' He replied, 'It is the saying *Allāhu Akbar*, *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, *SubḥānAllāh*, *Alḥamdulillāh*, and *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*."

Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān and Al-Ḥākim, and others.[3]

Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh has been counted as one of the *'enduring good deeds'* mentioned in the *ayah* by some of the Companions and Tabi'īn (the generation that followed the Companions). Imām Aḥmad narrated that 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān was asked about the enduring good deeds, so he said it is *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, *SubḥānAllāh*, *Alḥamdulillāh*, *Allāhu Akbar*, and *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*.[4]

Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī narrated that Ibn 'Umar (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhumā*) was asked about the enduring good deeds, so he said it is *La ilāha*

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[3] Aḥmad, 3/75, Ibn Ḥibbān #840 Tirmidhī #346 and Ḥākim 1/512.
The chain contains Abū al-Samḥ Darāj ibn Sam'ān, who is weak when he narrates from Abū al-Ḥaytham, and this is from one of those narrations. cf. *Tarqīb al-Tathīb* #201.

[4] Aḥmad, 1/71.

illa Allāh, *Allāhu Akbar*, *SubḥānAllāh*, and *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.* [5]

Mālik narrated that 'Umārah ibn Ṣayyād said that Sa'īd ibn al-Mussayyab said, "The enduring good deeds are *SubḥānAllāh*, *Alḥamdulillāh*, *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, *Allāhu Akbar*, and *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.*" [6]

Ibn Jarīr also narrated that 'Umārah ibn Ṣayyād said that Sa'īd ibn al-Mussayyab asked him about the enduring good deeds, so he said they are prayer and fasting, to which he said that is incorrect. So 'Umārah said they are Zakah and Ḥajj, so he said that is incorrect, and then he continued, "Rather they are the five words: *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, *Allāhu Akbar*, *SubḥānAllāh*, *Alḥamdulillāh*, and *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.*" [7]

This statement of Sa'īd ibn al-Mussayyab gives the impression that the enduring good deeds are limited to these five words. However, the opinion of many scholars is that they entail all righteous actions, as Ibn 'Abbās (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhuma*) said when explaining the verse:

وَٱلْبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ

"The enduring good deeds"

[*al-Kahf* (18) 46],

"They are the remembrance of Allāh, *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, *Lā Ḥawla*

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[5] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 15/255.

[6] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 15/254.

[7] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 15/256.

wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh, seeking Allāh's forgiveness, sending salawat upon the Prophet (ﷺ), prayer, fasting, Ḥajj, and charity, freeing slaves, fighting in Allāh's Cause, keeping the ties of kinship, and all forms of good deeds - they are the enduring good deeds that stay with a person in Paradise as long as the heavens and earth remain."[8]

3. The Prophet (ﷺ) informed that these words are a treasure from the treasures of Paradise.

Bukhārī and Muslim narrated that Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) said, "We were traveling with the Prophet (ﷺ), and if we walked towards higher ground we would say *Allāhu Akbar.*" In another narration, "We would not ascend to a high place or descend to a low valley except that we would raise our voices with *Takbīr*, so the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Oh people, take it easy upon yourselves, for you are not calling upon the One who is deaf or absent, rather you are calling the One who is All-Seeing, All-Hearing." Then he came to me when I was saying to myself, "*Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*" and he said to me "O Abdullāh ibn Qays (Abū Mūsā's real name), say *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*, for it is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise." Or he said "Should I not guide you to a word that is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise: *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.*"[9]

Some scholars commented on this ḥadīth, saying: The Prophet (ﷺ) was a teacher to his nation, and if he saw his people doing a good deed, he liked for them to increase (in it). Thus he liked for

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[8] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 15/256.

[9] Bukhārī #4205-6384 and Muslim 2704.

the people whom had raised their voices with the statement of *Tawḥīd* and *Allāhu Akbar*, to add to that that they have no might or strength, so they would combine between *Tawḥīd* and belief in *Al-Qadar* (predestination).[10]

It has been narrated in a ḥadīth "If a person says *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*, Allāh says, "He has submitted and surrendered." Narrated by al-Ḥākim, and Ibn Hajr said its chain is strong.[11]

In another narration, he said, "Should I not guide you to a word from below the Throne, that is from the treasures of Paradise. Say *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*, so Allāh will say, 'My slave has submitted and surrendered himself.'" Narrated by al-Ḥākim, who said it is authentic, and there is nothing in its chain that would weaken it, and al-Dhahabī agreed with him.

Al-Nawawī said the meaning of 'the treasure' here is the reward that Allāh has stored in Paradise, which is a priceless reward, just as a treasure is the most valuable kind of wealth.[12]

Ibn Hajr said it is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise in the sense that its reward is stored for its companion, similar to a hidden treasure in this life, because a person who hides a treasure does so to save it from any afflictions, and to enjoy it later on as he wishes.[13]

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[10] *Fath al-Bārī*, 11/501.

[11] *Fath al-Bārī*, 11/501.

[12] *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 26/17.

[13] Ibn 'Alān in *al-Fatuḥāt al-Rabāniya*, 1/238.

4. We have been ordered to increase in saying the *ḥawqalah*, for it is planted in Paradise.

Imām Aḥmad and Tirmidhī and Ibn Ḥibbān and others narrated that Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (*raḍiyAllāhu ʿanhu*) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by Ibrāhīm on the night of Isrā', so he said to him, "O Muḥammad, order your nation to increase in the plants of Paradise." The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him what they are? He replied '*Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.*'"[14]

Imām Aḥmad also narrated that Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiyAllāhu ʿanhu*) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Increase in saying '*Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*', for it is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise."[15]

5. The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that it is one of the doors of Paradise.

Aḥmad and Tirmidhī and al-Ḥākim narrated that Qays ibn Ṣaʿd ibn ʿUbāda's father wanted him to serve the Prophet (ﷺ), so Qays said, "One day the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by me after prayer and nudged me with his foot and said, 'Should I not guide you to a gate from the gates of Paradise?' I said, 'Of course'. So he said, '*Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.*'"[16]

6. Allāh confirms his saying

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[14] Aḥmad, 5/418 and Ibn Ḥibbān #821.

[15] Aḥmad, 2/333.
It was declared ṣaḥiḥ by al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥiḥah* #1528.

[16] Aḥmad, 3/422 and al-Ḥākim, 4/290
cf. *al-Ṣaḥiḥah*, 4/35-37.

Ibn Mājah, al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Ḥibbān and others narrated that Abū Hurayrah and Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhuma*) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "If a person says 'There is no one worthy to be worshipped but Allāh and Allāh is the greatest', Allāh says, "My slave has told the truth, there is no one worthy to be worshipped but I, and I am the greatest."

If he says, 'There is no one worthy to be worshipped but Allāh alone', Allāh says, 'My slave has told the truth, there is no one worthy to be worshipped but me alone'. If he says, 'There is no one worthy to be worshipped but Allāh without any partner,' Allāh says, "My slave has told the truth, there is no one worthy to be worshipped but me without any partner to Me'. If he says, 'There is no one worthy to be worshipped but Allāh, to him belongs the dominion and all praise is due to him,' Allāh says, 'My slave has told the truth, there is no one worthy to be worshipped but me, the dominion belongs to Me and all praise is due to Me'. If he says, 'There is no one worthy to be worshipped but Allāh, *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*. Allāh says, 'My slave has told the truth, there is no one worthy to be worshipped but I, and *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*.'"

Then the narrator of this ḥadīth said something that the next narrator did not understand, so he asked what he said. He was told, "He said that whoever says them at his time of death will never be touched by the Hellfire."

Al-Tirmidhī said this is a ḥasan ḥadīth and Al-Ḥākim authenticated it with the agreement of al-Dhahabi, as did al-Albānī.[17]

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[17] Ibn Mājah, #3794, Tirmidhī, #3430, Ibn Ḥibbān #851 and al-Ḥākim, 5/1 It was declared ḥasan by al-Albānī, *Silsalah al-Ṣaḥiḥah* #1390.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: *Dhikr* is a reason for Allāh to confirm His slave's saying, for the person making *dhikr* informs of Allāh's lofty attributes and description, so Allāh confirms his statement. And whoever's statement is considered truthful by Allāh, then he would not be gathered with the liars, rather it is hoped he would be gathered with the truthful ones. [18]

So these are some of the virtues that show the lofty status of this statement. Ibn al-'Irāqī has gathered the virtues of *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'* in the form of a short poem, saying:

"My companion, increase in saying *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*, for it is a cure for the sickness,
And it is a treasure from Paradise, what a great success for a person who will reside in them, His Lord will say to him:
"My slave has willingly submitted himself to me.""

Ibn al-'Irāqī also said:

"Declare yourself free from any strength or might, and you will achieve the treasure in Paradise,

Submit all your affairs to Allāh, so you may spend your days in Paradise,

Do not hope for anyone if a misfortune strikes, except your Lord, the possessor of bounties and favors,

Be consistent in doing good deeds, performing your obligations and Sunnah actions,

Have a clean heart towards other Muslims, free of spite, hatred, or suspicions."[19]

[18] *Al-Wābil al-Sayyib*, p.160.

[19] cf. *Faḍl Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh* of Ibn 'Abdul al-Ḥādī, p.39-40.

CHAPTER THREE

The Creedal Implications of *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*

We have previously mentioned some of the virtues and benefits of this statement, and some of its implications and deeper meanings.

From the best ways to understand the implications and meanings of this statement, is the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) to Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*), "Should I not guide you to a word that is from underneath the Throne (of Allāh) and from the treasures of Paradise? To say, '*Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*', and so Allāh says, 'My slave has submitted and surrendered himself.'"[1]

Ibn 'Abd al-Hādi narrated in his book 'The virtue of *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*', with his chain of narration to Ibn 'Abbās (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhuma*), that he said, "Whoever says, 'In the name of Allāh', then he has remembered Allāh. Whoever says, 'All praise is for Allāh,' then he has thanked Allāh. Whoever says, " "'Allāh is the Most Great', then he has glorified Allāh. Whoever says, 'There

[1] Already mentioned

is no one worthy of worship but Allāh', then he has affirmed the Oneness of Allāh. And whoever says, 'There is no might or power but with Allāh', then he has become Muslim and surrendered, and it will be for him a treasure from the treasures of Paradise.[2]

It was narrated that Ibn 'Umar (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhuma*) said, "*SubḥānAllāh* is the prayer of the creation, *Alḥamdulillāh* is the statement of thanks, *Lā ilaha illa Allāh* is the statement of sincerity, *Allāhu Akbar* fills up what is between the heavens and earth, and if he says *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh*, then he has become submitted and surrendered himself."[3]

It is a statement of Islām and submission (to it), and leaving of our affairs to Allāh and declaring ourselves free from any power or might except from Allāh. It is a statement that (shows) a slave does not have complete control over his affairs, nor does he have a defense against evil or the ability to bring about good, except by the Will of Allāh. A person thus cannot change his state (*ḥāl*) from sin to obedience or from sickness to health or weakness to strength, or deficiency to perfection and increase, except by Allāh. Nor does he have strength to control his affairs, or to realise his goals except by Allāh.

Whatever Allāh wants will happen, and whatever He does not want will not happen. All affairs are in His Hand and all the affairs of the creation are controlled by his *Qaḍā'* and *Qadar* (predestination). He changes their affairs as He wishes, and He Commands whatever He wishes, no one can stop His Command, and no one can put back His judgment.

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[2] cf. *Faḍl Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh* of Ibn 'Abdul al-Ḥādī, p.35

[3] cf. *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ* of Tabrīzī, 2/718.

Whatever He wants will happen exactly when and how He desires, with absolutely no increase or decrease. To him belongs the creation and the command, the dominion and praise, this life and the next and all bounties and blessings are from Him - and to Him is the most beautiful praise. His power encompasses all things,

إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُۥٓ إِذَآ أَرَادَ شَيْـًٔا أَن يَقُولَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٨٢﴾

> "His command is only when He intends a thing that He says to it, 'Be' and it is."
>
> [*YāSīn* (36) 82]

مَّا يَفْتَحِ ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِن رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا ۖ
وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

> "Whatever Allāh grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter..."
>
> [*Fāṭir* (35) 2]

Whoever has these (divine) Attributes, then it is obligatory to submit to Him as the true object of worship and to surrender to His Greatness and to entrust our affairs to Him, and to know that we have no strength or might except from Him. For this reason, Allāh has ordered us to say this statement, and made it a door to Paradise and one of its treasures.

It is a great statement, which indicates sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) to Allāh in seeking His Help, just as the statement of *Tawḥīd*, "There is none worthy of worship but Allāh" indicates sincerity to Allāh in His worship. Just as the statement "There is none worthy of worship but Allāh" can only be realised by making worship only for Allāh, likewise the statement "There is no power or might except with Allāh" is only realised by seeking help from Allāh. Allāh has

combined between these two in the greatest chapter in the Qur'ān, *Al-Fātiḥah*, when He said:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝٥

"It is you we worship, and you we seek help from."

The first statement is a disavowal of *shirk*, and the second is a disavowal of strength and might from other than Allāh, and leaving the affairs to Allāh.

Worship is tied to the "*Ulūhiyyah* (Oneness of Allāh's worship), while seeking help is tied to the *Rubūbiyyah* (Oneness of Allāh's Lordship). Worship is the goal, while seeking help is a way to that goal - so the goal of worship of Allāh can only be achieved by seeking the help of Allāh, to Whom belongs all strength and might. We can summarise the theological implications of this great statement as follows:

1. It is a statement of seeking help from Allāh, so the one who is consistent in saying it is likely to achieve the aid and tawfeeq of Allāh.

Shaykh al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah said: "*Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh* obligates the help of Allāh, so for this reason the Prophet (ﷺ) taught us to say it when it is said in the *adhān* (daily call to prayer): *'Hayya 'ala as-Ṣalāh'* (hasten to the prayer), so a person should say: 'There is no might or power except with Allāh', and likewise when it is said *'Hayya 'ala al-Falāḥ'* (hasten to the success).

And the believer said to his companion:

وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ إِن تَرَنِ أَنَا۠ أَقَلَّ مِنكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴿٣٩﴾

"It was better for you to say, when you entered your garden: 'That which Allāh wills (will come to pass). There is no power but with Allāh.' If you see me less than you in wealth, and children."

[*Al-Kahf* (18) 39]

For this reason, if a person fears the *'Ayn* (evil eye that causes harm due to a person's envy) he should say: *'Mā shā' Allāh'*, the meaning of which is: 'Whatever Allāh wants will happen'. So he believes in the *Qadar* (predestination) without feeling safe from it; and he says *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*, for in the authentic ḥadīth of Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "It is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise." That is because it entails putting one's trust in Allāh, and showing our need for Him.

It is known that nothing happens except by the will and power of Allāh, and that the creation has nothing to do with it except what Allāh gave them the ability to do. Thus if a person cuts off his desire for help from the people, and instead seeks help from Allāh, then he has sought help from his Creator, who is truly the only one to aid and help. Allāh said:

مَّا يَفْتَحِ ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِن رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا ۖ وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

"Whatever Allāh grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can

release it thereafter. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise."

[*Fāṭir* (35) 2]

He also said

وَإِن يَمْسَسْكَ ٱللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُۥٓ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَإِن
يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَآدَّ لِفَضْلِهِۦ ۚ يُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۚ
وَهُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٧﴾

"And if Allāh should touch you with adversity, there is no remover of it except Him; and if He intends for you good, then there is no repeller of His bounty. He causes it to reach whom He wills of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful."

[*Yūnus* (10) 107]

And

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلْ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَدْعُونَ
مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَٰشِفَٰتُ ضُرِّهِۦٓ
أَوْ أَرَادَنِى بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَٰتُ رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ قُلْ حَسْبِىَ
ٱللَّهُ ۖ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

"And if you asked them, 'Who created the heavens and the earth?' they would surely say, 'Allāh'. Say, 'Then have you considered what you invoke besides Allāh? If Allāh intended me harm, are they removers of His harm; or if He intended me mercy, are they withholders of His mercy?' Say, 'Sufficient for me is Allāh; upon

Him [alone] rely the [wise] reliers.'"

[*al-Zumar* (39) 38]

And the man in *YāSīn* said,

ءَأَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً إِن يُرِدْنِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ بِضُرٍّ لَّا تُغْنِ عَنِّى شَفَٰعَتُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يُنقِذُونِ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِنِّىٓ إِذًا لَّفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

"Should I take other than Him [false] deities [while], if the Most Merciful intends for me some adversity, their intercession will not avail me at all, nor can they save me? Indeed, I would then be in manifest error"

[*YāSīn* (36) 23-24]

For this reason, Allāh ordered for people to have *tawwakul* (dependence and reliance) upon him alone in many places in the Qur'ān, and as was mentioned in a narration: "Whoever wants to be the strongest of people, then let him depend on Allāh. And whoever wants to be to richest of people, than he should have more trust in what is in Allāh's hand than what is in his own." [5]

For this reason, it has been narrated that from the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) is for a person to say this statement when he leaves his home for any worldly or religious purpose, to show that he is depending on Allāh and seeking His Aid. Anas ibn Mālik (*raḍiyAllāhu ʿanhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Whoever says (when leaving his home),

«بِسْمِ اللهِ، تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَىٰ اللهِ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ»

[5] Majmoo' Al-Fatāwa, 13/321-322

> *'Bismillāh tawakkaltu 'ala Allāh wa Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*,
>
> In the Name of Allāh, I have placed my trust in Allāh, there is no might and no power by Allāh.

Then it will be said to him: You have been sufficed, protected and guided, and *Shayṭān* will be kept away from him - so another *Shayṭān* will say: what can you do to a man that has been guided, sufficed, and protected?" This was reported by Abū Dāwūd and al-Tirmidhī, who said the ḥadīth is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.[6]

This is why some of the scholars write *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'* in the beginning of their books, as a way of seeking Allāh's Help, such as in the book (*Sarīḥ al-Sunnah*) by Imām Ṭabarī, or (*al-Arba'īn fī Dalā'il at-Tawḥīd*) by al-Ḥarāwī, or (*al-Ṣifāt*) by al-Dāraquṭnī, and other books.

2. It entails a confession of the *Rubūbiyyah* (Oneness of Lordship) of Allāh, that He alone is the Creator of this universe, who controls its affairs, and he Commands what He wills by His Wisdom. Nothing happens in this universe, neither movement nor stillness, or increase or decrease, or honour or disgrace, or giving or withholding, except by His will. He does what he wishes, He cannot be stopped or defeated, rather he has defeated all of His creation, and everything has submitted humbly to Him. As Allāh said:

أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

"Verily to him belongs the creation and the command,

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[6] Abū Dāwūd #5095 and Tirmidhī #3426
It was declared ṣaḥiḥ by al-Albānī to his checking of Ibn Taymiyyah's *Kalim al-Ṭayyib*, p.49.

blessed is Allāh, Lord of the worlds."

[*al-A'rāf* (7) 54]

He also said:

مَّا يَفْتَحِ ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِن رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا ۖ وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

"Whatever Allāh grants to people from (His) Mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds none can release it after Him..."

[*Fāṭir* (35) 2]

And He said:

يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ ۖ مَا مِن شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِۦ ۚ

"He is arranging the matter. There is no intercessor except after His permission."

[*Yūnus* (10) 3]

So the one who makes this statement is affirming this fact, submitting himself and admitting that all of his affairs are in the Hand of his *Rabb*, Master and Creator. A person has no ability to do anything except by the Will of Allāh and His *tawfiq*. For this reason he seeks refuge and help from Him alone, and depends on Him in all of his matters.

3. This statement entails an affirmation of the Names of Allāh and His Attributes, for the one who says it is doubtlessly affirming that the one he is making *du'ā* to and seeking refuge with is free of needs, while everything else needs Him. He is completely independent and everything else is dependent upon Him. He is able to do all things, and everyone else is helpless to do anything

except with the Will of Allāh. He is described with all of the descriptions and attributes of perfection and majesty, and everyone else has imperfections. Complete perfection is ascribed to Allāh alone, and for this reason He alone should be sought out for worship and refuge with him.

4. It reflects the intertwined relationship between *Tawḥīd* of knowledge in its two forms, *Tawḥīd Al-Rubūbiyyah* and the *Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt* - and the *Tawḥīd* of action, which is *Tawḥīd Al-Ulūhiyyah.*[7]

For when the slave affirms the *Rubūbiyyah* (Oneness of Lordship) of Allāh and the perfection of His Names and Attributes, this entails that he would not seek refuge or help from other than Allāh. If he does not do so, then he is not a true *Muwwaḥid* (monotheist) merely by outwardly affirming Allāh's Lordship and Attributes. Thus if a person was to affirm Allāh's Attributes as He deserves, and glorified Him from all shortcomings, and that He is the Creator of all things, he would not be from the people of faith and monotheism as long as he does not testify that there is none worthy to be worshipped but Allāh, and acts according to that. So he worships none but Allāh, nor does he put his trust in anyone but Him or do anything except for His Sake.

5. It entails the affirmation of the "*Ulūhiyyah* (Oneness of Divinity) of Allāh, that He alone is the one worthy to be worshipped and no one else deserves worship aside from Him. That is the meaning of *'illa billāh'* (except with Allāh.)

[7] The scholars mentioned different categories of *Tawḥīd*, as some said *Tawḥīd* is three kinds: *Ulūhiyyah*, *Rubūbiyyah*, and *Asmā' wal-Ṣifāt.* While many earlier scholars mentioned only two kinds, since they combined between *Rubūbiyyah* and *Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt.* So it is only a difference in categorisation, while the end result is the same. (Translator)

The meaning of the word *"Allāh"* is as was explained by Ibn 'Abbās, when he said: "The Possessor of "*Ulūhiyyah* and *'Ubūdiyyah* over all the creation."[8] Here he combined in his explanation between the mention of *'Ulūhiyyah*, which is a description associated with Allāh from His Name, for he alone is worshipped and hoped from and obeyed, none deserves worship besides him. He then mentioned *'Ubūdiyyah*, which is associated with the creation, since the slaves of Allāh are the ones who worship and obey Him alone with no partners.

The name *'Allāh'* encompasses all of the beautiful Names of Allāh, and implies them in a general way. All of His other Names are an explanation and clarification of the name *'Allāh'*. So from the distinctive factors of this Name is that all the other Names of Allāh are ascribed to this Name, as Allāh said: "To Allāh belongs the most beautiful Names, so call Him by them." Hence why we say, *al-'Azīz* and *al-Ḥakīm*, etc. are from the Names of Allāh, but we do not say *'Allāh'* is one of the Names of *al-Raḥmān*, for example. For the Name *'Allāh'* has a special distinction and attribute.

Ibn Mandah said, "The name of Allāh is the Name that indicates His being. Allāh has forbidden anyone from the creation from using this Name for themselves, or that another false god should be called by His Name. He has made it the first level of faith in Him and the pillar of Islām, and the statement of *ikhlāṣ* and a refutation of belief in polytheism. It protects and sanctifies the life of the one who says it, all obligatory deeds are started with His Name, and by it a person comes into the fold of *īmān*, and by it refuge is sought from *Shayṭān*. All things begin and end by His Name, may He be glorified, and there is no one worthy of

[8] Reported by Ibn Jarīr in his *Tafsīr*, 1/54

worship but Him."[9]

6. The statement *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'* entails the belief in the *Qaḍā'* and *Qadar* (predestination). For this reason, Imām al-Bukhārī titled a chapter in the Book of *Qadar* in his Ṣaḥīḥ: *'Chapter: Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.'* The implication of this statement in the belief in predestination is clear, for it entails the submission of the slave and that he possesses no true strength, rather all matters happen only by the Will of Allāh.

Ibn Baṭṭāl said, "The Prophet (ﷺ) was a teacher to his nation, so if he saw his people doing a good deed, he liked for them to increase (in it). Thus he liked for the people that raised their voices saying *'Lā illaha illa Allāh'* and *'Allāhu Akbar'* to add to that the fact they have no true strength, so they would combine between monotheism and belief in *Qadar*." [10]

7. It contains the meaning of (true) *Du'ā'* - calling upon Allāh - which is the soul and essence of worshipping Allāh. Imām al-Bukhārī narrated in the book of *Du'ā'* in his Ṣaḥīḥ, a chapter that he titled: *'Chapter: the saying of Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh.'* This indicates that it is one of the beneficial Prophetic Du'ā's that contains great (depth of) meanings in a short concise statement.

8. It entails the belief in the Will of Allāh, and that whatever Allāh wants will happen, and whatever He does not want will not happen. So the will of a slave is beneath the Will of Allāh, as Allāh said:

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[9] Ibn Mandah's *al-Tawḥīd*, 2/21.

[10] *Fath al-Bārī*, 11/501.

لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمْ أَن
يَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَمَا تَشَآءُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

> "For whoever wills among you to take a right course. And you do not will except that Allāh wills - *Rabb* of the worlds."
>
> [*al-Takwīr* (81) 28-29]

The slave has no power to perform what he wants of good deeds except if Allāh wants, as Allāh said:

وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ
دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ

> "And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, 'What Allāh willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allāh?'"
>
> [*Al-Kahf* (18) 39]

9. It is a confession from the slave of his need and poverty to his Lord in all of his affairs, as Allāh said:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ أَنتُمُ ٱلْفُقَرَآءُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ
ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾

> "O mankind, you are those in need of Allāh, while Allāh is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy."
>
> [*Fāṭir* (35) 15]

Allāh shows in this noble verse that a characteristic (shared by) all the creation is their need of Allāh. This need is an essential quality of mankind, and it applies to all of them. So no one is free of need of his Lord, not even for the slightest moment.

Ibn al-Qayyim said, "Know that every living being aside from Allāh, needs something to bring what benefits him, and repel what harms him. Beneficial things to a living thing include pleasure and enjoyment. Harmful things are those such as pain and punishment. There are two things that are necessary:

1. One is the beneficial thing that is sought and intended and loved.

2. The second is that what assists and leads to and fulfills the intended thing, and protects from harm occurring, and lifts the harm after it happens.

Thus in actuality, there are four matters:

1. The thing that is sought and the love for it to occur,
2. A hated thing that is not wanted,
3. The way (and means) to achieve the beloved thing,
4. The way (and means) to repel the harmful thing.

These four matters are necessary for the slave, rather for every living thing besides Allāh, and one cannot achieve his well-being except by these means.

If this is established, then Allāh is the One who is sought, worshipped, and loved alone with no partner. He alone is the one who assists the slave in letting him achieve what he seeks. No one can be worshiped but Him, and no one assists but Him. Everything other than Him is the harmful thing which needs to be repelled, and He alone is the One who can repel the harm. So Allāh alone is the only One who fulfills these four attributes, and this is the meaning of our saying:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾

"It is you we worship, and you we seek help from."
[*al-Fātiḥah* (1) 5]

For this worship entails, (firstly) that which is sought and intended in the most perfect form. Secondly, it entails the help we ask from Allāh to achieve what benefits and repel that what harms. The first is from the meanings of *'Ulūhiyyah*, and the second the meaning of *Rubūbiyyah*.[11]

10. This statement shows the importance of the connection with Allāh in all matters, religious and worldly. If the slave truly implements its meaning then his certainty would become stronger, and his sincerity and trust in Allāh would increase. The truthful Muslim remembers this in all of his affairs. So when he is praying, fasting, making *Ḥajj* or doing any other good deed, he seeks strength from Allāh to fulfill and achieve and finish that deed. Likewise, when seeking provision and in other worldly matters, he seeks strength from Allāh to achieve that. So he always depends on Allāh to achieve his worldly needs and be protected from its calamities, and he depends on Allāh to achieve what Allāh loves and is pleased with, such as *īmān* (faith), *yaqīn* (certainty), prayer, fasting, *Ḥajj*, *Jihād*, calling to Islām and other good deeds.

11. The statement *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'* is a refutation of the Qadariyyah, who deny predestination and the power of Allāh. They make the slave the creator of his own actions, with Allāh having no part in that. Thus this statement confirms that true power and will is for Allāh, and the strength of a slave is only by Allāh - so this statement entails a refutation of the

[11] *Tarīq al-Hijratayn* of Ibn Qayyim, p.53

Qadariyyah sect who deny this.

Ibn Baṭṭāl said, "This is a great chapter in the refutation of the Qadariyyah, for the meaning of *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'* is that Allāh creates the strength and might, by which one has the ability to do good or bad deeds - as was narrated on the Prophet (ﷺ) that Allāh is the Creator of the strength of the slave and his ability to do what Allāh has Ordained. If there is a creator of the (strength and) ability, then there is no a doubt a Creator for that which was ordained."[12]

12. It also entails a refutation of the Jabriyyah sect, who denied the will of the human being and his ability. They say a person is forced to do every action, as if he is a leaf in a strong wind, with no might or ability. So this statement is a clear refutation of them, for it confirms that there is strength and might attributed to the person, which occurs by the will of Allāh and His ability:

لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمْ أَن يَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَمَا تَشَآءُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

> "For whoever wills among you to take a right course. And you do not will except that Allāh wills - *Rabb* of the worlds."
>
> [*al-Takwīr* (81) 28-29]

So these are some of the (theological) implications of this great statement, and some of its amazing meanings which clearly show its great status and benefits.

[12] It is mentioned by Ibn 'Alān in *al-Fatuḥāt al-Rabāniya*, 1/242-243.

CHAPTER FOUR

Some Misunderstandings of the meaning of the *Ḥawqalah*

In the previous chapters, we have read the meaning of this great statement, some of its virtues, and its implications regarding creed. In this chapter, we will mention some of the incorrect understandings relating to this statement, both in its wording and its meaning.

1. From them is that some people use this statement incorrectly, so they make it a statement of disappointment or sadness, and it is not understood to mean the seeking of help from Allāh. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: "This statement is a statement of seeking assistance, not a statement of sadness, and many people use it at times of calamity like the statement *'Inna lillāhi wa inna ilayhi raji'ūn'* (to Allāh we belong, and to him we shall return). And they say it out of despair, not out of patience.[1]

2. From them is what was narrated by some of the scholars of the Arabic language; that one should say: *'Lā hīl wa la Quwwah'*.[2]

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[1] *Al-Istiqāmah*, 2/81

[2] *Tathīb ul-Lugha* of al-Azharī, 5/244 and *Ṣiḥāḥ* of Al-Jawharī, 4/1682.

al-Nawawī said: "Al-Jawharī mentioned (the use of) a strange and weak language that one should say *'Ḥīl'* with the letter *yā'*, and he said that its meaning is the same as *'Ḥawl'*.[3]

3. Some of the lay-people shorten it by saying only *'Lā Ḥawl Allāh'*. This is a shortening that changes the meaning, and it neglects the fact that the *adhkār* (supplication) are perfect both in their wording and meaning.

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn al-'Uthaymīn was asked about this, and he replied: "It is as if they intend *'Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'*, so the mistake here is in the wording, and it is upon them to pronounce it fully as it was intended."[4]

4. From these mistakes is to twist its clear meaning to far-fetched possibilities, as Yayḥa ibn Rabī', the Ash'arī, said: "This statement shows that there is an ability of the slave... and that he has an ability while being forced." [5]

I say, this is exactly the blameworthy type of *tawīl* (interpretation of the meaning), for he twisted the statement *Lā Ḥawla wa lā Quwwata illa Billāh'* to conform to the belief of the Ash'arī sect.

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[3] *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 4/87.

[4] In his collected verdicts and works compiled by Fahd Sulayman, 3/129.

[5] The belief of the Ash'arī sect is that Allāh is the only one that truly acts, and the slave only fulfills what Allāh decreed. They drew the example of a light bulb: A father wanted to test his son, so he told him, 'If you blow on the light bulb and it turns it off, I will punish you.' Then the son blew on the light bulb, even though blowing on it has no effect, so the father turned off the switch at the exact same moment. The father then punished his son, even though his action had no true effect.

This belief is that a person has an ability that has no effect, which they call *'Kasb'* (earning). This entails the belief in the statement of the Jabriyyah sect who deny a person's ability altogether, since there is no difference between claiming a person having an ability which has no effect, and between denying that a person has any ability altogether.[6] That is why he said 'An ability while being forced', because a person has an ability to act according to the Ash'ariah, but this ability has no true effect - and the end result of this is the belief that a person is forced to do all of his actions, as is the belief of the Jahmī sect. Allāh knows best.

In the end, I praise Allāh for his blessing me in preparing this topic and making it easy for me. I ask Allāh to accept it and make it beneficial for his slaves; He is the Most Generous and the One upon Whom we place our hopes. He is sufficient for us and the best of Protector.

[6] *al-Fatuḥāt al-Rabāniya*, 1/242.

APPENDIX ONE

The Great Principle

As for the principle, it is that the deeds of man are not sufficient to deliver him from Hellfire, or to grant him entry into Paradise; instead this can only come about through the mercy of Allāh and His forgiveness. The Qur'ān supports this meaning in many places such as His sayings,

فَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَأُخْرِجُوا۟
مِن دِيَـٰرِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِى وَقَـٰتَلُوا۟ وَقُتِلُوا۟ لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ
عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

> Those who migrated and were driven from their homes and suffered harm in My way and fought and were killed, I will erase their bad actions from them and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath them as a reward from Allāh[10]

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُم بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَرِضْوَٰنٍ وَجَنَّـٰتٍ لَّهُمْ فِيهَا
نَعِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

[10] *Āli 'Imrān* (3): 195

> Their Lord gives them the good news of his mercy and good pleasure and Gardens where they will enjoy everlasting delight, remaining in them timelessly, for ever and ever[11]

> تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ
> فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾
> يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ

> ...it is to believe in Allāh and His Messenger and to do Jihād in the Way of Allāh with your wealth and your selves. That is better for you if you only knew. He will forgive you your wrong actions and admit you into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath them...[12]

Mentioning victory and entry into Paradise alongside forgiveness and mercy thereby proving that this cannot be attained except by these.

Some of the Salaf said, 'The Hereafter consists either of Allāh's forgiveness or the Fire; and this world is either a source of Allāh's protection or a source of destruction.' On his deathbed, Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ bid farewell to his companions saying, 'Peace be upon you, either to the Fire or to the forgiveness of Allāh.'[13]

As for the saying of Allāh,

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[11] *al-Tawbah* (9): 21

[12] *al-Ṣaff* (61): 11-12

[13] Abū Nuʿaym, *al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 2, p. 348 #199.

وَتِلْكَ ٱلْجَنَّةُ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

That is the Garden you will be made to inherit for what you did.[14]

كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَآ أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَيَّامِ ٱلْخَالِيَةِ ﴿٢٤﴾

...eat and drink with relish for what you did before in days gone by![15]

The scholars differed concerning the meaning of this, falling into two opinions:

1) Entry into Paradise is accorded by His mercy, but the assignment of ranking and station in Paradise is done in accordance to the deeds one performed.[16] ibn 'Uyaynah said, 'They were of the opinion that salvation from the Fire occurs through the forgiveness of Allāh, entry into Paradise occurs by His grace, and the apportioning of ranking occurs in accordance to one's deeds.'

2) That the *ba* which has been mentioned in His sayings, *"for what you did", "for what you did before in days gone by"* is the *ba* used to indicate causality (*sabab*). Hence the meaning is that Allāh has appointed deeds to be the means for entry into Paradise. The *ba* which has been negated in his (ﷺ) saying, "Actions alone will not cause one to enter Paradise" is the *ba* indicating com-

[14] *al-Zukhruf* (43): 72

[15] *al-Ḥāqqah* (69): 24

[16] Ibn Ḥajr, *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, vol. 11, p. 295, quoted this opinion from ibn Baṭṭāl.

parison and compensation (*muqābalah*) and replacing like for like (*mu'āwidah*).[17] The meaning of the ḥadīth would then be that none deserves entry into Paradise by virtue of the deeds he has performed. Through this explanation the erroneous understanding that Paradise is the imbursement of deeds is dispelled: the understanding that the person, by virtue of his deeds alone, has the right to be granted entry into Paradise by Allāh; just as one who pays the price for a commodity has the right that it be given him by the seller. This explanation makes clear that actual entry comes to pass by the grace and mercy of Allāh, and that deeds are a cause for the entry into Paradise.

Therefore actual entry into Paradise is dependant upon the grace of Allāh, His forgiveness and mercy: He is the one who blessed the person with the means and the result of that means. Hence entry is not a direct outcome of actions in and of themselves. It is recorded in the Ṣaḥīḥ that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Allāh, Blessed and Exalted, said to Paradise: You are My mercy, I show mercy through you to whoever I will of My servants."

The servants have no right over Him that He must render,
Never! Neither, in His presence, is any effort wretched.
If they are punished, then by His Justice; if they are in bliss,
Then by His beneficence. He is the Kind, the Vast.

[17] Ibid., quoting this opinion from Kirmānī.
Meaning like a business transaction in which one buys a commodity and gives, in return, its equivalent price.

al-Ḥamdulillāh is the Imbursement of Every Favour

If it is said: but Ḥabīb ibn al-Shahīd reports al-Ḥasan as saying, '*al-Ḥamdulillāh*[18] is the imbursement of every favour and *Lā ilāha illAllāh*[19] is the imbursement for Paradise.'

The meaning of this statement has also been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) on the authority of Anas, Abū Dharr and others. Even though the isnāds of all these aḥādīth contain weakness,[20] the meaning is supported by the saying of Allāh,

۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلَهُم
بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةَ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ
وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ
وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِۦ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ فَٱسْتَبْشِرُوا۟
بِبَيْعِكُمُ ٱلَّذِى بَايَعْتُم بِهِۦ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١١﴾

> Allāh has bought from the believers their selves and their wealth in return for the Garden: they fight in the Way of Allāh and they kill and are killed. It is a promise binding on Him in the Torah, the Injīl and the Qur'ān and who is truer to his contract than Allāh? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the

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[18] Tr: All praise is due to Allāh.

[19] Tr: There is none worthy of worship save Allāh.

[20] Ghazālī quoted them in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 1, p. 299, and 'Irāqī said, 'Recorded by ibn 'Adī and Mustaghfirī and none of them are authentic.'

supreme triumph.[21]

Here, Paradise has been appointed the imbursement for self and property.

The response to this is that Allāh, Glorious and Exalted is He; through His beneficence, mercy, kindness, and generosity; has addressed His servants in a way that would encourage them to obey Him, using language and concepts that they can readily understand and relate to. He placed Himself in the position of a buyer and debtor, and placed them in the position of sellers and creditors. This then encourages them to answer His call and rush to His obedience. In reality, however, everything belongs to Him and is granted by His grace and mercy: the self and property belong to Him and this is why He commanded us to say at the onset of calamity,

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

To Allāh we belong and to Him are we returning.[22]

Despite this, He commends those who expend their selves and properties for His sake, comparing them to sellers and creditors. Therefore man is likened to someone who has property which he can sell and give as a loan to someone else who does not possess it.

In the same way, all deeds come about as a result of His grace and mercy, yet He commends those who perform them, attributes the deeds to them, and appoints them to be a show of gratitude, and return, for His favours.

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[21] *al-Tawbah* (9): 111

[22] *al-Baqarah* (2): 156

Elucidation of the meaning of 'favours'

Ibn Mājah records on the authority of Anas that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "There is no favour which Allāh bestows upon His servant for which he says, '*al-Ḥamdulillāh,*' except that which he gave was better than that which he took."[23] This was also stated by 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Azīz,[24] al-Ḥasan,[25] and others from amongst the Salaf.[26]

The meaning of this has troubled a great number of scholars, past and present, but if it is understood in the light of our preceding discussion, its meaning is obvious. The meaning of favour mentioned in the ḥadīth is worldly favour and the statement of praising Allāh is one of the religious favours. Religious favours are better than worldly favours. Now, because the favour of praising Allāh has been attributed to the servant since he articulated it, Allāh considers him as giving the greater favour as a return for the original favour.[27] This is why it is mentioned in a narration, '*al-Ḥamdulillāh*, with a praise that befits and suffices His favours;

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[23] Recorded by ibn Mājah #3805 on the authority of Anas.
Būḍayrī said, 'Its isnād is ḥasan,' as did Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 1, p. 34, and Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb* #1573 ruled it ḥasan.
What "he gave," was the statement of praise and what "he took," was the favour. Refer to Sindī, *Ḥāshiyah 'alā Ibn Mājah,* vol. 4, pg. 251.

[24] Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab al-Īmān* #10038.

[25] Ibid. #4406 and Ibn Abī al-Dunya, *al-Shukr* #111.

[26] Such as Bakr ibn 'Abdullāh, ibid. #4408.

[27] When in reality it is Allāh who granted both.

represses His retribution; and acts as return for His addition.'[28]

When understood in this light, the statement of praise is the imbursement of Paradise.

Both Paradise & Deeds are from the Grace of Allāh

Therefore, to be correct, both Paradise and deeds are granted to the believing servants by the grace and mercy of Allāh. This is why the inhabitants of Paradise will say upon entering it,

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى هَدَىٰنَا لِهَٰذَا
وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِىَ لَوْلَآ أَنْ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ لَقَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ

> Praise be to Allāh who guided us to this! We would not have been guided had Allāh not guided us. Verily the Messengers of our Lord came with the Truth.[29]

After they acknowledge that it was through the favour of Allāh that they were granted Paradise, and that it was through His favour that they were they granted the accord to enact the means leading to it, i.e. His guidance, and after having praised Him for this, they are rewarded with the call,

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[28] Ibn Ḥajr, *Talkhīṣ al-Ḥabīr*, vol. 4, p. 171, said, 'It is reported that Jibrīl taught Ādam these words, *'al-Ḥamdulillāh*, with a praising that befits, and suffices, His favours and recompenses His addition,' and then said, 'I have taught you comprehensive words of praise.' Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ said in his discussion to *al-Wasīṭ*, 'Ḍa'īf isnād, munqaṭī.' Nawawī, *al-Rawḍah*, said, 'I found it in ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *al-Amālī*... and it is mu'ḍal.'

[29] *al-A'rāf (7)*: 43

أَن تِلْكُمُ الْجَنَّةُ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

Behold! This is the Garden you will be made to inherit for what you did.[30]

Their deeds were attributed to them and they were shown appreciation for them.

It is with this overall meaning that some of the Salaf said, 'When a servant commits a sin and says, "My Lord, You decreed this for me!" His Lord will say, "You are the one who sinned and disobeyed Me!" Now if the servant says, "My Lord, I erred, committed a sin, and wrought evil," Allāh will respond by saying, "I decreed this upon you and I will forgive you."'

Misery and Felicity occur Through His Justice and Mercy

The true purport of his (ﷺ) words, "Your actions alone will not save any of you", "Actions alone will not cause one to enter Paradise" can be be further understood when it is realised that the reward of good deeds, multiplied manifold, only comes about by the beneficence and grace of Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent. He recompenses a good deed tenfold to seven-hundred fold to whatever He wills.[31] Were He to recompense a good deed with its like, in the same way that He does for an evil deed, good deeds would never have the strength to render void the evil deeds, and one would surely be destroyed.

[30] *al-A'rāf* (7): 43

[31] Muslim #131/338.

Ibn Mas'ūd (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) said, while describing good deeds, 'If one is an ally (*walī*) of Allāh, and there remain an atoms weight of good [after the mutual recompense], Allāh would increase this manifold such that he enter Paradise through it.[32] If he be one for whom misery is decreed, the Angel says, "My Lord, His good deeds have vanished yet many more people remain seeking [mutual recompense]." He will reply, "Take their evil deeds and add them to his evil deeds, then prepare for him a place of torment in the Fire!"'[33]

Therefore it becomes clear that Allāh multiplies the good deeds of those He wishes felicity for until they are able to pay off any penalties [from any who seek mutual recompense]; and if, after all this, there remains even an atoms weight worth of good, Allāh will multiply this until He enters Paradise through it. All this by His grace and beneficence! However, whoever Allāh has decreed misery for; his deeds will not be multiplied to the extent that they are able to pay off his penalties. Instead any good deeds performed by this latter person will only be multiplied ten-fold, apportioned amongst his creditors who will accept them all and yet still require further repayment for remaining injustices, and therefore their bad deeds are piled onto his, thereby causing him to enter the Fire. This by His justice![34]

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[32] This meaning is also recorded by Ḥākim #7641, 7642 on the authority of ibn 'Abbās that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "....then if a good deed remains, Allāh will expand generously [a place] for him in Paradise."

Ḥākim said it was ṣaḥīḥ with Dhahabī agreeing.

[33] Abū Nu'aym, vol. 4, p. 224 #5328; ibn al-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd* #1416.

[34] Muslim #2581/6579 records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) asked, "Do you know the bankrupt person is?" They said, 'A bankrupt man amongst us is one who has neither dirham with him nor =

It is in this light that Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh said, 'When He extends His grace, not a single evil deed remains for that person! When His justice is brought forth, not a single good deed remains for that person.'[35]

It is also established in Bukhārī and Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whoever's account is scrutinised will be destroyed",[36] in another narration, "...will be punished"[37] and in another narration, "...will be defeated."[38]

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wealth.' He said, "The bankrupt person of my nation would be he who comes on the Day of Resurrection with prayers and fasts and Zakāt but he hurled abuses upon this person, brought calumny against that person, unlawfully consumed the wealth of that person, shed the blood of that person, and beat that person. So his good deeds would be credited to the deeds of those people [by way of retaliation] and if his good deeds fall short to clear the account, their sins would be added to his and he would be thrown in the Fire."

Muslim #2582/6580 records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "All rights will be restored to their owners on the Day of Judgment. Even a hornless goat that is butted by a ram will have justice."

[35] Abū Nu'aym, vol. 10, p. 69 #14593.

[36] Bukhārī #6537 and Muslim #2876/7227, 7228 on the authority 'Ā'ishah. The wording of Bukhārī has 'Ā'ishah then asking, 'Does not Allāh say, ***"Then he who is given his Record in his right hand, soon will his account be taken by an easy reckoning,"*** [*al-Inshiqāq* (84): 7-8]?' He replied, "That is not the scrutiny that is a presentation, whoever's account is scrutinised will be punished."

[37] Bukhārī #6536 and Muslim #2876/7225 on the authority 'Ā'ishah.

This wording mentioned above is also recorded by Tirmidhī #3338 on the authority of Anas.

[38] Ḥākim #8728 and Dhahabī said the isnād contained a weak narrator.

Ibn Abī Shaybah, vol. 13, p. 360, has the wording, "...will not be forgiven," and ibn al-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd* #1324 also records this wording as a statement of 'Ā'ishah.

Abū Nu'aym records on the authority of 'Alī that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Allāh revealed to a Prophet amongst the Prophets of the Children of Israel, 'Say to those who obey Me amongst your nation that they should not overly rely on their deeds for on the Day of Judgment I will not settle the accounts of a servant I wish to punish except that I will punish him. Say to those who disobey me amongst your nation that they should not despair for I readily forgive even the great sins'"'[39]

'Abdu'l-'Azīz ibn Abū Rawwād said, 'Allāh inspired Dāwūd (*'alayhis-salām*) saying, "Dāwūd, give glad tidings to the sinners and warn those who give in charity." Surprised, Dāwūd said, "My Lord, why should I give glad tidings to the sinners and warn those who give in charity?" He replied, "Give glad tidings to the sinners that there is no sin that I find too grievous to forgive[40] and warn those who give in charity that there is no servant upon whom I mete My justice and judgment except that he is destroyed."'[41]

Ibn 'Uyaynah said, 'Scrutiny here means to undergo the evil of a thorough examination such that nothing is leftover.'[42]

Ibn Yazīd said, 'The severe reckoning is that which contains no

[39] Ṭabarānī, *al-Awsaṭ* #4844.
Its isnād contains a weak narrator as per Haythamī, vol. 1, p. 307. The author, *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm*, vol. 1, p. 177, said the isnād was ḍa'īf.

[40] Even *shirk* if one repents from it.

[41] Abū Nu'aym, vol. 8, p. 211 #11906.

[42] Ibn Abī Shaybah #35644 records that Abū al-Jawzā' said concerning the verse, ***"...and dread a woeful reckoning."*** [*al-Ra'd* (13): 21], 'It means to undergo a questioning about one's deeds.'

pardoning[43] and the easy reckoning is that in which ones sins are forgiven and good deeds accepted.'[44]

All of these narrations show that that servant cannot possibly succeed without forgiveness, mercy and the overlooking of his faults. They also show that when Allāh enacts pure justice upon the servant, he will certainly be destroyed.

Allāh's Blessings can Never be Truly Repaid

This is further clarified by His saying,

ثُمَّ لَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٨﴾

Then you will be asked that Day about the pleasures you enjoyed.[45]

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[43] Ar: *'Afw*: the overlooking of a sin.

[44] Ṭabarī #34361, 36738

Aḥmad #24215-25515 records on the authority of 'Ā'ishah that she asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) what the ***"easy reckoning"*** [*al-Inshiqāq* (84):8] was to which he replied, "A person has his sins presented before him only to have them overlooked. For sure, the one whose account is questioned will be destroyed."

It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by ibn Ḥibbān #7372, ibn Khuzaymah #849, and Ḥākim #936 with Dhahabī agreeing.

[45] *at-Takāthur* (102): 8

Tirmidhī #3358 records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The first thing that the servant will be asked about on the Day of Judgment of the pleasures will be: Did We not give you a healthy body? Did We not give you cool water to drink?"

It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by ibn Ḥibbān #7364 and Ḥākim #7203 with Dhahabī agreeing.

This verse shows that the servants will be asked about the pleasures they enjoyed in this world: did they show gratitude for them or not? Anyone who is required to display gratitude for every favour such as good health, sound senses, good livelihood, and, moreover, will be thoroughly examined, should know that all of his deeds taken together cannot repay even some of these favours. Hence that person would be deserving of punishment.

Kharā'iṭī, *Kitāb al-Shukr*, records on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The servant will be summoned on the Day of Judgment and he will stand before Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent. He will say to His Angels, 'Look at the deeds of My servant and the favours I bestowed upon him.' They will look and say, 'They do not even amount to one of Your favours granted him.' Then He will say, 'Look to his evil deeds and good deeds.' They will look and find them the same whereupon He will say, 'Servant of Mine, I have accepted your good deeds and forgiven you your evil. My favours, I have gifted you'"[46]

Ṭabarānī records on the authority of ibn 'Umar (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "A person will be brought on the Day of Judgment with such deeds that would burden a mountain were they to be placed on it! Then just one favour from amongst the favours of Allāh would be displayed and would almost extinguish all those deeds were Allāh not to distend them through His mercy."[47]

[46] Kharā'iṭī #57.
The author, *Jāmi'*, vol. 2, p. 79, said the isnād was problematic.

[47] Ṭabarānī, *al-Awsaṭ* #1604, on the authority of ibn 'Umar.
The author, *Jāmi'*, vol. 2, p. 77, points out that the isnād has weakness as did Haythamī, vol. 10, p. 420.

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā records on the authority of Anas that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "On the Day of Judgment, blessings will be brought forward as well as good deeds and bad deeds. Allāh will say to just one of His blessings, 'Take your due from his good deeds,' and it will take all his good deeds."[48]

He also records that Wahb ibn Munabbih said, 'A servant worshipped Allāh for fifty years. Allāh inspired him with the words, "I have forgiven you." The servant asked, "Lord, what have you to forgive, I have committed no sin!" Thereupon Allāh ordered a vein in his neck to throb painfully such that he could not pray or sleep. After a while it was cured and an angel came to him, and to him he complained about the vein. The angel said to him, "Your Lord, Mighty and Magnificent says: your worship for the last fifty years equates to the soothing of that vein."'[49]

Ḥākim records on the authority of Jābir that the Prophet (ﷺ) said that Jibrīl said, "A servant worshipped Allāh on the top of a mountain, in the middle of an ocean, for five hundred years. Then he asked his Lord to let him die in the state of prostration. We used to pass by him each time we would descend and ascend and we would find written in the (pre-eternal knowledge) that he would be resurrected on the Day of Judgment and would stand before Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent. The Lord would say, 'Enter My servant into Paradise by virtue of My mercy.' The servant will say, 'My Lord, rather by virtue of my deeds!' This will happen three

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[48] Ibn Abī al-Dunyā #24.

Its isnād contains a narrator who is matrūk and the author, *Jāmi'*, vol. 2, p. 78, said the isnād was ḍa'īf. However the meaning can be said to be correct.

[49] Abū Nu'aym, vol. 4, p. 70 #4784; and ibn Abī al-Dunyā #148.

times, then Allāh will say to His angels, 'Weigh my favours against his deeds,' and they will find that the blessing of sight alone takes up all the deeds he did during his five hundred years of worship, with the other bodily blessings still remaining. He will say, 'Enter My servant into the Fire!' He will be dragged towards the Fire and will cry out, 'Enter me into Paradise by virtue of Your mercy! Enter me into Paradise by virtue of Your mercy!' Thereupon he shall enter Paradise." Jibrīl went on to say, "Muḥammad, things only happen by the mercy of Allāh."[50]

Whoever understands all of what has preceded will realise that his deeds, even if they are great, are not sufficient to merit his success and entry into Paradise or salvation from the Fire in and of themselves.[51] As such, he will no longer overly rely on his deeds or be impressed by them, even if they be great and wonderful. If this is the case of great and many deeds, what then would one think of the paltry deeds of the many? Such a person should ponder his deficiency in worship and devote himself to penitence and repentance!

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[50] Ḥākim #7637 who said it was ṣaḥīḥ but Dhahabī criticised this verdict saying that one of its narrators was not to be depended upon.

The author, *Jāmi'*, vol. 2, p. 79, points out that the ḥadīth is not authentic.

[51] Aḥmad #17650 records on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Amīrah that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Were a servant to remain in the state of prostration from the day he was born to the day he dies an old man, in devout obedience to Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent, he would consider that insignificant on the Day of Judgment and would wish to return to this world so that he may increase in reward."

It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb* #3597.

One of the Greatest Blessings is Gratitude

As regards one whose deeds are great and many, he must busy himself with showing gratitude for them, for the accord to show gratitude is one of the greatest blessings Allāh bestows upon His servant. It is obligatory upon him to meet these deeds with gratitude and realise his deficiency in displaying due gratitude.

Wahb ibn al-Ward, when asked about the reward of a particular deed, said, 'Ask not about its reward, but ask about the gratitude due upon one who was guided to it.'[52]

Abū Sulaymān would say, 'How can an intelligent person be amazed with his deeds? Deeds are one of Allāh's blessings, as such it is upon him to show gratitude and to show humility. It is only the Qadariyyah who are amazed at their deeds!'[53] i.e. those who do not believe that the actions of the servant are created by Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent.

How excellent is the saying of Abū Bakr al-Nahshalī on the day that Dāwūd al-Ṭā'ī died. After his burial, ibn al-Sammāk[54] stood and praised him for his good deeds and wept causing all present to weep as well and testify to the truth of what he said... Abū Bakr al-Nahshalī stood and said, 'O Allāh, forgive him and show

[52] Abū Nu'aym, vol. 8, p. 155.

[53] Ibid., vol. 9, p. 276 #13896.

[54] Ibid., vol. 8, p. 223 #11949, records that he used to say, 'Astounding it is that the eye can take delight in sleep when the Angel of Death is standing by one's pillow!'

mercy to him and leave him not to his deeds!'[55]

Abū Dāwūd records on the authority of Zayd ibn Thābit (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Were Allāh to punish the inhabitants of the heavens and the inhabitants of the earth, He could do so without having oppressed them in any way. Were He to show them mercy, His mercy would be better for them than their deeds."[56]

Ḥākim records on the authority of Jābir (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) that a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, 'Sins, sins!' repeating this two or three times. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Say: O Allāh, Your forgiveness is vaster than my sins and I have more hope in it than I do my deeds." He said this and the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Repeat it." He did so and he was ordered to repeat it again which he did. Then he (ﷺ) said, "Stand for you have been forgiven."[57]

My sins, were I but to ponder them, are copious.

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[55] Ibid., vol. 7, p. 396 #10977.

[56] Abū Dawūd #4699 and ibn Mājah #77.
It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by ibn Ḥibbān [#727] and Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* #5244
Allāh, Exalted is He says, ***"If Allāh took mankind to task by that which they deserve, He would not leave a living creature on the surface of the earth; but He grants them reprieve unto an appointed term, and when their term comes - then verily Allāh is ever Seer of His bondsmen."*** [*Fāṭir* (35):45]
Ibn Ḥibbān #659 records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Were Allāh to take me and 'Īsā to account for our sins, He could punish us without wronging us in the least!"
It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by ibn Ḥibbān and Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb* #2475.

[57] Ḥākim #1994.
It was declared ḍa'īf by Albānī, *Ḍa'īf al-Jāmi'* #4101.

But greater yet is my Lord's forgiveness:
In my righteous deeds lies not my expectation,
But in the mercy of Allāh have I anticipation.

Acknowledging the Grace of Allāh

Now that this noble principle has been established, it is known that deeds, in and of themselves, do not necessitate salvation from the Fire and entry into Paradise, let alone necessitating the ascension to the uppermost levels of Paradise: the levels of Those Brought Close, and seeing the face of the Lord of the worlds, and it is known that this can only come to pass through the mercy of Allāh, His grace, and forgiveness. This then requires the believer to abandon thinking highly of his deeds and to look solely to the grace of Allāh and His blessings.

One of the Gnostics was asked, 'Which deed is best?' He replied, 'Realising the grace of Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent.' He then recited,

If quantities were able to aid in any way,
They would join the obtuse with the judicious.

When all of this is understood, it is obligatory upon the believing the servant; the servant who desires salvation from the Fire and entry into Paradise, who desires to be close to His Master and to look on at His face; to seek all of this by taking to the means that lead to Allāh's mercy, pardon, forgiveness, pleasure, and love. It is in this way that he will attain His munificence. The means are the various deeds Allāh has appointed: only those deeds that He has legislated upon the tongue of His Messenger: only those deeds

that His Messenger told us would serve to draw us closer to Allāh: those deeds that He loves and lead to His pleasure and forgiveness. Allāh, Exalted is He, says

إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

Allāh's mercy is close to the good-doers.[58]

وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ

My mercy extends to all things but I will prescribe it for those who have *taqwā*...[59]

So it is obligatory upon the servant to seek out those traits of *taqwā*[60] and goodness that Allāh has legislated in His Book or

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[58] *al-A'rāf* (7): 56

[59] *al-A'rāf* (7): 156

[60] Ṭalq ibn Ḥabīb said upon being asked about *taqwā*, 'That you perform the obedience of Allāh upon a light from Allāh, hoping for the reward of Allāh. You leave disobedience to Allāh upon a light from Allāh, fearing the punishment of Allāh.'

Recorded by ibn al-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd* #473 with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Risālah al-Tabūkiyyah*, p. 27, said, 'This is the best that has been said concerning the definition of *taqwā* for indeed every action must have a beginning cause to it and an objective. An action can never be considered to be obedience and a cause to draw one closer to Allāh until its point of commencement and cause be unadulterated faith, not habit, not base desires, not the wish for praise and position, nor other such things. Its objective must be the reward that lies with Allāh and His good-pleasure, this being the definition of *iḥtisāb*. This is why we often find the combined mention of these two foundations such as in his (ﷺ) saying, "Whoever fasts the month of Ramaḍān out of faith and *iḥtisāb*...".

His saying, 'upon a light from Allāh' points to the first foundation which is =

upon the tongue of His Messenger (ﷺ), and having done so, draw closer to Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent, through enacting them. There is no other path that can lead to the goal of the believing servant.

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faith. His saying, 'hoping for the reward of Allāh' points to the second foundation which is *iḥtisāb.*'

Taken from Ibn Rajab's *'al-Maḥajjah fī Sayri'l-Dulja'*, translated in English under the title *'The Journey to Allāh'*, p18-38. Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers 2007.

APPENDIX TWO

The Most Beloved Deeds to Allāh

The Prophet (ﷺ) indicated the most beloved of deeds to Allāh in the hadīths of 'Ā'ishah and Abū Hurayrah quoted at the beginning of this treatise. They are of two types:

1) Those that are done continuously and persistently, even if they be few. This was the description of the deeds of the Prophet (ﷺ), and the deeds of his family and wives after him. He would prohibit the severance of deeds saying to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhumā*), "Do not be like such-and-such a person who used to pray by night and then left it."[61]

He (ﷺ) said, "The supplication of one of you will be answered so long as he is not hasty and impatient, saying, 'I have supplicated and supplicated but have not been answered,' so he despairs and abandons the supplication."[62]

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[61] Bukhārī #1152 and Muslim #1159/2733.

[62] Bukhārī #6340 and Muslim#2735/6934-6936 on the authority of Abū Hurayrah.

al-Ḥasan said, 'When Shayṭān looks at you and sees you persistent in your obedience to Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent, he will do his utmost to deceive you; if he still sees you persistent, he will give up on you and leave. However, if he sees you alternating between this and that, he will have hope in you.'

2) Those deeds that are done with steadiness, balance, and ease as opposed to those that entail hardship and undue striving. Allāh, Exalted is He, says,

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلْعُسْرَ

> Allāh desires for you ease; He desires not hardship for you.[63]

مَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ حَرَجٍ

> Allāh does not wish to place you in a difficulty.[64]

هُوَ ٱجْتَبَىٰكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

> He has chosen you and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship.[65]

The Prophet (ﷺ) would say, "Make things easy and do not make them difficult."[66]

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[63] *al-Baqarah* (2): 185

[64] *al-Mā'idah* (5): 6

[65] *al-Ḥajj* (22): 78

[66] Bukhārī #3038 and Muslim #1732/4525-4526 on the authority of Abū Mūsā; Bukhārī #69, 6125 and Muslim #1734/4528 on the authority of Anas.

He (ﷺ) said, "You have been sent to make things easy, you have not been sent to make things difficult."[67]

Aḥmad records on the authority of ibn 'Abbās (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) that it was asked of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), 'Which of the religions is most beloved to Allāh?' He replied, "The easy and natural religion."[68]

Aḥmad records on the authority of Miḥjan ibn al-Adrā' that the Prophet (ﷺ) entered the *Masjid* to see a man standing in prayer. He asked, "Do you think him to be truthful?" It was said, 'Prophet of Allāh, this is so-and-so, he is the best of the residents of Madīnah and the most frequent of them in prayer!' He said, "Do not let him hear you lest you render him to ruin[69] - he said it two

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[67] Bukhārī #220 and Abū Dāwūd #380.

[68] Aḥmad #2107 and Bukhārī, vol. 1, p. 93, as a ta'līq report.

Ar: *al-Ḥanifiyyah al-Samḥah.* Shaykh Sindī said, 'al-Ḥanafiyyah is an attribution to the religion of Ibrāhīm and what is meant here is the religion of Islām with which our Prophet (ﷺ) was sent for it resembles the religion of Ibrāhīm in its foundations and in many of the subsidiary issues. The Ḥanīf in the language of the Arabs is one who follows the religion of the Ibrāhīm. al-Samḥah means that which is easy upon the self and not burdensome like monasticism.'

Aḥmad #24855 also records on the authority of 'Ā'ishah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "I have been sent with the easy religion."

[69] Bukhārī #2663-6060 records on the authority of Abū Mūsā that the Prophet (ﷺ) heard a person excessively praising another person to which he said, "You have broken his back!"

Aḥmad #5684 records on the authority of ibn 'Umar that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "If you see those given to praising, throw dust in their faces." It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by ibn Ḥibbān #5770 and Haythamī, vol. 8, p. 117.

or three times - you are a nation from whom ease is desired."[70]

Another narration has the wording, "The best part of your religion is the easiest of it."[71] Another narration has the wording, "You will not attain this matter through excess and trying to overcome it."[72]

This ḥadīth was also recorded by Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh and his version adds, "...do such actions as you are able to bear, for Allāh does not stop (rewarding you) until you grow tired and give up, and upon you is a journey [to Allāh] at the beginning of the day, at the end of the day, and a portion of the latter part of the night."[73]

Aḥmad records on the authority of Buraydah (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhu*) who said, 'I went out only to see the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), so I joined him. We saw a man in front of us praying many prayers and he (ﷺ) asked, "Do you think he is showing off?" I said, "Allāh and His Messenger know best." He released his hand from mine

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[70] Aḥmad #20347.

It was declared authentic by Haythamī, vol. 3, pp. 308-310, vol. 4, p. 15.

"A nation from whom ease is desired," meaning that you have no need of going to such extremities in worship, and neither should a person be praised for doing so, rather a balanced path is more deserving.

[71] Aḥmad #18976. The meaning is that one should be balanced in actions of worship without going to extremes.

[72] Aḥmad #18971.

Bukhārī #39 records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "This religion is easy, none makes it hard except that it will overwhelm him. Therefore be firm, steadfast, and balanced..."

[73] The first part of this ḥadīth is also recorded by Bukhārī #43-1151

and joined both his hands together, lowering and raising them saying, "Stick to a middle path for whoever makes this religion difficult will find that it overwhelms him.'"[74]

This ḥadīth is also recorded as a mursal report and it mentions that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "This person has taken to the way of difficulty and not to the way of ease." He then pushed the man in his chest and left and that man was not seen in the *Masjid* again.[75]

The Prophet (ﷺ) objected to those who wished to continuously live a life of a hermit, to be castrated, to pray through the whole night, fast every day, and recite the whole Qur'ān every night such as 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, 'Uthmān ibn Maẓ'ūn, al-Miqdād, and others. He (ﷺ) said, "...but I fast, and I break my fast; I pray by night and I sleep; and I marry women: whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me."[76]

He finally advised 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr to recite the Qur'ān completely every seven days, and one narration mentions that he finally advised him to complete it once every three days. He (ﷺ)

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[74] Aḥmad #19786,-22963.
Ibn Khuzaymah #1179 said it was ṣaḥīḥ as did Ḥākim #1176 with Dhahabī agreeing.
The last sentence is also recorded by Aḥmad #23053 on the authority of Buraydah al-Aslamī.

[75] Aḥmad #13052 records on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "This religion is powerful so travel through it with gentleness."
He also #1851 records on the authority of ibn 'Abbās that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Beware of excessiveness in the religion for those who came before you were destroyed because of it."

[76] Abū Dāwūd #1369 on the authority of 'Ā'ishah.

said, "The one who recites it in less than three days has not understood it." With regards fasting he (ﷺ) finally advised him with the fast of Dāwūd saying, "There is no fast better than that." With regards praying by night he (ﷺ) advised with the prayer of Dāwūd.[77, 78]

[77] Bukhārī #3418 and Muslim #1159-2729-2730-2739. The fast of Dāwūd is to fast one day and not fast the next. The night prayer of Dāwūd consisted of him sleeping half the night, praying the next third, and sleeping the next sixth.

[78] Taken from Ibn Rajab's *'al-Mahajjah fī Sayri'l-Dulja'*, translated in English under the title *'The Journey to Allāh'*, p39-44. Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers 2007.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

'Ā'ishah: bint Abū Bakr *as-Ṣiddīq*, the Mother of the Believers and most beloved wife of the Prophet (ﷺ). She reported many *aḥādīth* from the Prophet and many Companions and Successors reported from her. She died in the year 58H.

'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās: bin 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib bin Hāshim bin 'Abd Munāf al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the cousin of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the interpreter of the Qur'ān. He was born three years before the *Hijrah* and was called the 'Ocean of knowledge' due to his vast knowledge. He took part in the *Jihād* in North Africa in the year 27H and died in the year 68H.

'Abdullāh bin 'Amr: bin al-'Ās bin Wā'il bin Hāshim bin Su'ayd bin Sa'd bin Sahm as-Sahmī. He and his father were Companions. He was literate and attained permission from the Prophet (ﷺ) to write everything he said. He died in the year 65H.

'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd: bin Ghāfil bin Ḥabīb al-Hadhlī Abū 'Abdur-Raḥmān. One of the scholars amongst the Companions and he witnessed *Badr* and the following battles. He had many virtues and died in the year 32H.

'Abdullāh bin 'Umar: bin al-Khaṭṭāb al-'Adawī, Abū 'Abdur-Raḥmān, the noble Companion and scholar. He reported many *aḥādīth* from the Messenger (ﷺ) and died in the year 73H.

Abū Bakr as-Ṣiddīq: 'Abdullāh bin 'Uthmān bin Āmir al-Qurashī. The first *Khalīfah* of the Messenger (ﷺ), his companion in the cave, his closest friend and one of the ten promised Paradise. He was the first man to accept Islām and died in the year 13H.

Abū ad-Dardā': Uwaymir bin Mālik bin Zayd bin Qays al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī. There is a difference of opinion concerning his name. He accepted Islām on the day of *Badr* and witnessed *Uḥud*. He was from the Legal Jurists and ascetics of the Companions. He died in the year 32H.

Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī: Jundub bin Junādah bin Sakn, he was of those who accepted Islām early on but delayed his migration and hence did not witness *Badr*. His virtues are many and he died in the year 32H.

Abū Hurayrah: 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Ṣakhr ad-Dusī. His name is greatly differed over. He accepted Islām in the year 7H and reported the most ḥadīth from the Prophet (ﷺ). He died in the year 59H.

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī: 'Abdullāh bin Qays bin Salīm. He had a beautiful recitation and was one of the scholars amongst the Companions. He died in the year 42H or 44H.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī: Sa'd bin Mālik bin Sinān bin 'Ubaid al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī. He and his father were both Companions and he

witnessed all the battles that followed *Uḥud.* He was one of the scholars amongst the Companions and reported many *aḥādīth* from the Messenger (ﷺ). He died in the year 74H.

'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib: bin 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib bin Hāshim al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the fourth Rightly Guided *Khalīfah* and one of ten promised Paradise. He accepted Islām at the age of thirteen and was famous for his chivalry, bravery and knowledge. He married Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Prophet (ﷺ) and was martyred in the year 40H.

'Amr bin al-'Ās: bin Wā'il al-Qurashī as-Sahmī. He accepted Islām during the year of *Ḥudaybiyyah* and was the one who conquered Egypt. He died in the year 43H.

Anas bin Mālik: bin an-Naḍar bin Ḍamḍam al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī, the servant of the Messenger (ﷺ). He witnessed *Badr* but was not of age to actually participate. He died in the year 93H.

'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb: Abū Ḥafs 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb bin Nufayl al-Qurashī al-'Adawī, the second Rightly Guided *Khalīfah* and one of the ten promised Paradise. He accepted Islām five years before the *Hijrah* and his acceptance was a great victory for the Muslims. He witnessed every battle that the Prophet (ﷺ) witnessed. He was martyred in the year 23H.

'Uthmān bin 'Affān: *Dhu an-Nurayn* 'Uthmān bin 'Affān bin Abū al-'Ās bin Umayyah al-Qurashī al-Amawī, the third Rightly Guided *Khalīfah* and one of the ten promised Paradise. He was known for his generosity and freely giving in the Way of Allāh. He was married to two daughters of the Prophet (ﷺ), Ruqayyah and after her death, Umm Kulthūm. He was martyred in the year 35H.

INDEX OF SECTS

AHLU'L-KALĀM: Adherents to speculative theology, people seeking to explain the articles and premises of belief and to give evidences for them based on philosophy and logic.

JABARIYYAH: Followers of the school of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān in his belief that all actions are decreed by Allāh and man has no control over them at all, instead he is forced to do what he does.

JAHMIYYAH: Followers of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān in his denial of the Names and Attributes of Allāh.

QADARIYYAH: Those who held the belief that man has complete free will in all that he does and that Allāh has no control over him.

INDEX OF ARABIC TERMS

Āyah: pl. *āyāt*. Sign, miracle, example, lesson, verse.
Adhān: *fiqh*: the call to prayer.
Ḍaʿīf: weak. A *ḥadīth* that has failed to meet the criteria of authenticity.
Dīn: religion, way of life.
Dhikr: remembrance, *fiqh*: making mention of Allāh.
Duʿā: supplication, invocation.
Fiqh: understanding and comprehension. *fiqh*: of the rulings and legislation of Islām.
Ḥadīth: pl. *aḥādīth*, speech, report, account. *fiqh*: a narration describing the sayings, actions, character, physical description and tacit approval of the Prophet (ﷺ).
Ḥajj: *fiqh*: pilgrimage, one of the pillars of Islām.
Īmān: faith that also comprises a meaning of submission. Its place is the heart, the tongue and the limbs and it increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience.
Jihād: striving in the Way of Allāh to make His Word supreme.
Qaḍā: see *qadar*.
Qadar: Allāh's decree of all matters in accordance with His prior knowledge and as dictated by His wisdom.
RaḍiyAllāhu ʿanhu/ʿanhā/ʿanhum/ʿanhumā: may Allāh be pleased with him/her/them/both of them.

Ṣaḥīḥ: healthy, sound, authentic, correct. A *ḥadīth* that has met the criteria of authenticity and can be used as a legal proof.

Ṣalāh: *fiqh*: the second pillar of Islām, the prayer.

Ṣawm: *fiqh*: fasting, one of the pillars of Islām.

Shahādah: testification, witness. The declaration that none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh.

Shirk: polytheism, associating partners with Allāh in matters that are exclusive to Allāh.

Sunan: a compilation of *aḥādīth*.

Sunnah: habit, customary practice, norm and usage as sanctioned by tradition. *fiqh*: the sayings, commands, prohibitions, actions, and tacit approvals of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Sūrah: chapter of the Qur'ān.

Tafsīr: elucidation, clarification, explanation. *fiqh*: of the Qur'ān.

Taqwā: fearful awareness of Allāh, pious dedication, being careful not to transgress the bounds set by Allāh.

Tawḥīd: the foundation stone of Islām, the absolute belief in the Oneness of Allāh - His being the sole Creator and Sustainer, His being the only One deserving worship and His being unique with respect to His Names and Attributes.

Ummah: nation, the Muslim nation.

Wuḍū': *fiqh*: ritual ablution.

Zakāh: *fiqh*: one of the pillars of Islām, an obligatory tax levied on a Muslim wealth subject to certain criteria.